



State University of New York
College of Environmental Science and Forestry
Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee Meeting
September 18, 2025 - 9:30 am
24 Marshall Hall & Zoom

MINUTES

Voting Committee Members of the Board of Trustees in Attendance:

Co-Chair John Bartow, Co-Chair Linda Brown-Robinson.

Non-Committee Members of the Board of Trustees in Attendance: Daniel Fitts, Rick Fedrizzi, Dereth Glance, Steve Sloan (via Zoom), Daniel Vera.

College Personnel and Students in Attendance:

Nichole Dougherty, Emily Friden, Joanie Mahoney, Kitty McCarthy, Matt Millea, Lindi Quackenbush, Aaron Rounds, Ragan Squier, Seth Thompson, Jennifer Webb, Baylee Woods, Robert MacGregor, and Jill Rahn.

1. Call to Order:

Chair Bartow called the meeting of the ESF Board of Trustees Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee to order at 9:30 AM. He reported that committees were discussed as part of the last Governance Committee meeting. Confirmed members of the Governance Committee include Committee Chair DeMarchi, Trustee Fedrizzi, Trustee Vera, and D. Glance. It was noted that the Governance Committee is not scheduled to meet but that all other Committees are scheduled to meet today.

2. Approval of the Agenda: Chair Bartow called for a motion to approve the agenda. Trustee Brown-Robinson motioned to approve the agenda. Trustee Bartow seconded, all approved.

3. Approval of the Minutes from November 28, 2022: Chair Bartow called for a motion to approve the minutes from the November 28, 2022, Committee meeting. Trustee Brown-Robinson motioned to approve the minutes. Trustee Bartow seconded, all approved.

4. Review of Committee Charter & History:

- No changes to the charters.
- Committee structure: Committee previously included community members. Chair Bartow recommends discussing the composition of the committee and inclusion of community members with Chief Diversity Officer, Seth Thompson.
- Chair Bartow confirmed/appointed the following DEI Committee Members: Trustee Bartow, Trustee Brown-Robinson, D. Glance, Trustee Vera.
- Chair Bartow reviewed history: 25-point plan from SUNY called for each campus to have a



Strategic Plan for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion. ESF started developing a strategic plan, but the plan never completed under the two former Chief Diversity Officers.

- President Mahoney and the Board Committee would like to see the development of a formal Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion strategic plan for ESF.

Trustee Fedrizzi asked if SUNY is taking a position on DEI under current federal climate, President Mahoney responded that SUNY has reinforced its priority of DEI. D. Glance noted that DEC wants its employees to reflect the population of the state and considers ESF a critical partner in ensuring that the environmental workforce reflects the population of New York State.

5. Self-Introduction by New Chief Diversity Officer: Seth Thomason.

- Impressed by students at SUNY ESF, values match his professional practice.
- Syracuse Native – Southwest side of town, graduate of Bishop Ludden High School.
- 25 years in academia, professional and community leadership roles with experience in:
 - Changes in classroom spaces.
 - Training and professional development for faculty.
 - VP of Student Affairs - Led 10 areas of campus.
 - City Council, elected twice by the largest ward in Cortland.
- Creating a 120 Day Plan- goal to identify campus needs and to serve the mission of the campus.
 - SWAT within first 40 Days.
 - Schedule listening session.
 - Meeting with groups on campus.
 - Student Affairs, MOSA
 - Reviewing Documentation.
- Chair Bartow noted that the IDEA Committee is restructuring into working committees in a council-like structure.

D. Glance questioned the hierarchy structure of the CDO position, specifically asking if the CDO is a direct report of the President and if there are support staff. S. Thompson responded that the CDO is a direct report of the President and that there is not currently support staff but that the former interim chief diversity officer and the Inclusion Diversity, Equity, and Access committee have provided some assistance. President Mahoney noted that the Finance Committee meeting would address questions on staffing.

Adjournment:

Chair Bartow motioned to adjourn. All approved. Meeting adjourned at 10:03 AM.

Minutes Respectfully submitted by Nichole Dougherty.